

# Jefferson County Historic Sites Preservation Commission

Annual Report 2015

to the

Jefferson County Board of Supervisors  
Jefferson County Courthouse, Jefferson, WI

September 8, 2015

# Jefferson County Historic Sites Preservation Commission (JCHSPC)

## Annual Report 2015

The JCHSPC helps Jefferson County to comply with **Wisconsin State Act 395**. The Act is described as follows:

“In Wisconsin, the primary historic preservation legislation is Wisconsin Act 395. Adopted in 1987, this legislation expresses the state's approach and commitment to historic preservation. It states:

The historical and cultural foundations of this state should be preserved as a living part of its community life and development... Increased knowledge of historic resources, the establishment of better means of identifying and administering them and the encouragement of their preservation will improve the planning of governmentally assisted projects and will assist economic growth and development... This act created the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places, which, like the National Register of Historic Places, lists "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects which are significant in national, state, or local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture." Criteria for the State Register are also similar to those of the National Register.” (<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:4294963828-4294961311&dsRecordDetails=R:CS113>)

We have started to accomplish the goals set by Act 395 in the rural areas of the Jefferson County, with the completion of the four historic surveys. Our Commission has much more work to do. The historic properties that have been surveyed are fragile cultural resources. Without a determined commitment to help preserve them, these properties may someday no longer be a part of our cultural heritage. We now need to look carefully at the “Economics of Preservation” considering how historic preservation can provide property owners with tax credits, potentially increase their property values, and enhance the livability within our communities for all of our citizens.

An important part of the Economics of Preservation is “Heritage Tourism,” which has the potential to boost our local economy. To quote the Wisconsin Department of Tourism: “...in 2011 tourism had a \$16 billion impact on the state economy, with tourism generating \$1.3 billion in state and local revenues and sustaining 1 in every 13 jobs in the state.”

(<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:4294963828-4294961311&dsRecordDetails=R:CS117>)

The JCHSPC looks forward to working with the Jefferson County Board, and the citizens of our county to help preserve, the delicate balance of our remaining rural historic buildings. Please stop in at one of our monthly Commission meetings, and learn more about how you can help us with our challenge, to preserve Jefferson County rural history.

# JCHSPC Summary of 2015

The JCHSPC held regular monthly Commission meetings

Received the **Historic Preservation Excellence Award** for the completion of our four county-wide historic surveys from the **Wisconsin Association of Historic Preservation Commissions (WAHPC)** on April 25, 2015. The WAHPC is statewide organization of historic preservation commissions.

Two framed certificates for Local Historic Landmark Designation were presented to the owners of the Mason Farm (2014) and the Wegner Cottage (2015).

We will hold the JCHSPC Annual Historic Preservation Conference, in Lake Mills, on **October 3, 2015**, that is open to the public, and largely serves Jefferson County residents.

Received a \$10,000 grant from the Wisconsin Historical Society to hire a consultant to write two applications for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for two historic properties.

**The two historic properties are:**

**Lorine Niedecker Cottage** - W7309 Blackhawk Island Road, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

**J.F. Keller Farmstead** - W2803 U.S. Hwy. 18, Helenville, WI 53137



# JCHSPC Future Goals and Objectives

- ❖ Continue to communicate with surveyed property owners and assist them with their historic preservation efforts.
- ❖ Help the current grant recipients to apply for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for their potentially eligible surveyed properties.
- ❖ Continue to recognize properties for Local Landmark Designation.
- ❖ Continue our partnership with the Wisconsin Historical Society Preservation Department, to educate and enable our citizens.
- ❖ Work with our community leaders to create a local/county vision for the Economics of Preservation.
- ❖ Host an Annual Historic Preservation Conference to share information about Jefferson County history, and our historic preservation efforts.

The Olin C. Parker Cottage, was built in 1941 is an example of a group of Rustic style cottages built on Lake Ripley, in the Town of Oakland. This property is potentially eligible for NRHP listing.





# 2015 Local Historic Landmark Designation was awarded to the Wegner Cottage, on Lake Ripley, in the Town of Oakland



Ray and Carol Wegner holding their  
framed JCHSPC Local Landmark  
Designation Certificate



The Wegner Cottage is part of the Shore Place subdivision platted by the  
Wahl family in 1931. The Wegner Cottage was constructed around 1940.

# Meet the Commission

As Chair of this Commission I am very proud to work with the following dedicated Commission members who are very committed to helping to preserve Jefferson County history and our historic resources. I would like to thank all of them for the time and energy that they devote to our Commission.

- ❖ Please keep in mind that currently, the public members of the Commission serve as volunteers, and do not receive any Jefferson County per diems for their time, or travel.
- ❖ The Jefferson County Historic Sites Preservation Commission was created by ordinance and was passed by the Jefferson County Board. The Commission is a Certified Local Government (CLG), designated by the Wisconsin Historical Society, which makes the Commission eligible for grants.



# Commission Members

- ❖ **Cindy Arbiture, JCHSPC Chair** - Cindy has served as president of the Concord Historical Society, since 1993. She is the past vice-president of the Jefferson County Historic Alliance; and was the Regional Representative for Southeast WI to the Wisconsin Council for Local History, an affiliate organization of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Cindy served as the secretary of the Jefferson County Sesquicentennial Committee. She worked at Old World Wisconsin as an educator, and she is the president of Museum Professional Services, Inc., a museum exhibit design firm. Cindy and her husband Bill have been restoring their 1900's farmstead in the Town of Concord for the past 25 years.



- ❖ **Robert Birmingham, JCHSPC Vice-Chair** - Robert is the retired Wisconsin State Archaeologist at the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) serving from 1989 to 2004. He was also acting Historic Preservation Division Administrator at the WHS between 1996-1997. Mr. Birmingham now teaches archaeology and biological anthropology at UW-Waukesha, and serves as the volunteer Executive Director of the Friends of Aztalan State Park. He has written many scholarly and public oriented articles and is the author of four books. Mr. Birmingham is recipient of many awards such as: Increase Lapham Medal from the Wisconsin Archaeological Society, the Wisconsin State Park Hero Award, the distinguished Steinberg Award from University of Wisconsin Press, and the Midwest Independent Book Publishers, Merit Award in History.





# Commission Members

- ❖ **Julia C. Ince, JCHSPC Secretary** - graduated with a PhD in Art History and a minor in American History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1999. She taught art history courses at University of Wisconsin-Parkside for four years and at Marquette University for one year before being hired to lecture at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in the fall of 2000. Her area of concentration is nineteenth century America art and her recent research has focused on American domestic architecture dating from the 1830's to 1850's. In addition to her teaching, Julia is an active artist and portrait painter. She has exhibited her work in numerous regional and national shows. She is a member of the Black Hawk Artists, of Fort Atkinson, WI.
- ❖ **Ed Morse, JCHSPC Member** - Ed was appointed by the Jefferson County Board to the Commission in 2014. Ed is a geologist with specialties in groundwater hydrology, engineering geology and environmental applications. He has worked as an environmental consultant for twenty years and in the field of groundwater supply for ten years, until retirement three years ago. He has also taught geology and environmental science courses at Illinois State University, Carroll College and Upper Iowa University, and is currently teaching part-time at Madison College. In the summer of 2007, he spent time in East Africa providing advice for water supply projects. He is in the process of writing a book on the history of drinking water in Wisconsin.



# Commission Members

- ❖ **Dr. James Levy, JCHSPC Member** - James is Assistant Professor of history and Director of the Public History Program at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. His specialties include African American intellectual and cultural history, history of place and race, race and ethnicity in American film and media, and a wide range of topics in oral and public history. Currently, Professor Levy serves as founding director of UW's statewide Wisconsin Farms Oral History project. Dr. Levy is currently working on a book manuscript on African American intellectuals and intellectual practice during the Progressive Era.
- ❖ **Michael Opager, JCHSPC Member** - Michael has served two terms on the Watertown Historic Preservation Commission, reviewing facade improvements in the city's historic downtown business district and approving grants to assist business owners with their projects. He has also served as the treasurer of the Watertown Olde House Society since its inception in 2007. Michael and his wife Lisa are Benefactors of the Watertown Historical Society, and are members of the Wisconsin Historical Society.





# Commission Members

- ❖ **John Molinaro**, graduated from Saint Joseph's College with a degree in Political Science, with minors in History and Communications. He worked for thirty years as a Juvenile Probation Officer before retiring, and moving to Jefferson County. He has served on the Board of the Lake Ripley Management Dist. since 1991, and as Chairman from 1993 to present. He also served on the Board of the Wisc. Assoc. of Lakes for four years. In 2004, he was elected to the Jefferson County Board where he served for five terms, the last four years as Chairman of the Board. While on the County Board, he wrote the ordinance creating the Jefferson County Historic Site Preservation Commission. Serving as the County Rep. on the Commission, he wrote four successful grants, which allowed the Commission to do a comprehensive survey of all the historic sites in rural Jefferson County. At present, he serves on the Board of the Hoard Museum, Fort Atkinson. John lives in the Town of Oakland with his wife Ann, and has been married 42 years.



# Thank You For Your Continued Support!

In closing, on behalf of the Jefferson County Historic Sites Preservation Commission,

I would like to thank:

Jefferson County Board Chairperson, Jim Schroeder,  
and the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors,  
for their continued support of our historic preservation efforts.

Additional thanks to: County Administrator, Ben Wehmeier;  
Finance Director, Brian Lamers; Administrative Secretary, Tammie Jaeger;  
and Central Duplicating Clerk, Kathy Hart,  
for their help over the past year.

Special thanks to the  
Wisconsin Historical Society staff from the  
Division of Historic Preservation and Public History  
and  
Joe DeRose - Survey and Registration Historian

Report prepared by: Cindy Arbiture, JCHSPC Chair